

[No. 1.]

# REASONS

FOR

INTRODUCING THE SABBATH OF THE FOURTH COM-  
MANDMENT TO THE CONSIDERATION OF  
THE CHRISTIAN PUBLIC.

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To search for the knowledge of our duty, as subjects of the Divine Government, is of the highest importance to Christians and to all men. "None of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," but "whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." It behooves us, therefore, to inquire, diligently and prayerfully, what God would have us to do, and how we may best glorify Him and save our generation? We should "seek wisdom as silver, and search for it as for hid treasure;" and we should labor after the knowledge, not only of *some* duties, but of *every* duty. "Obey my voice," is the reiterated mandate of Jehovah. To give full proof of our friendship for Christ, we must "do whatsoever he hath commanded us." Hence the importance of "searching the Scriptures," and of carefully pondering the testimonies of God. All should pursue this course, and feel this responsibility; for "every one of us shall give account of himself unto God." Hence the propriety and neces-

sity, in many cases, of *individuals* dissenting from the views and decisions of *collective bodies*, and of *minorities* dissenting from *majorities*, and protesting against what they discover to be erroneous, unequal, and oppressive, in their resolves and measures—accompanying the same with a particular statement of their reasons. Such a course expresses a determination “not to be partakers of other men’s sins,” and is often the means of leading to investigation and reform.

This duty is acknowledged, and this privilege is claimed, by the observers of the *seventh day*, in relation to the subject of the Sabbath. Compared with the many who assume the Christian name, we are a *minority*—a *mere remnant*—and our reasons and motives for dissent from the great mass of believers, have been by most but partially, if at all, examined and weighed. Believing, as we do, that we have a full and explicit Divine warrant for our practice, we regard it as our duty to make renewed efforts to sustain the claims of the original Sabbath of God’s appointment, enlighten the public mind, disarm our neighbors and fellow Christians of their prejudices, and promote a more thorough and impartial attention to this item of religious practice. The object of this Tract is not to enter fully upon the proofs of our doctrine and practice, but to invite attention to the subject, and impress the reader with the importance of correct views and of being sustained in Sabbath principles and efforts by an explicit warrant from God himself, in order the more effectually to secure the sanctification of this precious institution. Accordingly, we proceed to state some of our Reasons for introducing the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment to the consideration of the Christian Public.

I. The general concession that the weekly Sabbath is a needful, wise, and valuable institution. Being a weekly rest from secular business and labor, it contributes to the health and vigor both of man and beast, encourages habits of cleanliness and decency, gives opportunity to cultivate the social virtues, makes man acquainted with man, and inspires a mutual regard for the interests of society; and, what is much more, it furnishes a proper and necessary season for mental improvement, public worship and instruction, private meditation and self-examination, the training up of children in the knowledge of God and of Heaven, and the deepening of our impressions of the value of time, and of the importance of preparing for eternity. These and similar considerations sensibly arrest the attention of sober and enlightened Christians, and secure a conscientious regard to the institution. This fact evinces the importance of being able to bring a *divine sanction* for a day so evidently desirable, and so generally esteemed—of being assured that it rests upon no doubtful authority, that it is not a mere human provision or a matter of expediency and accommodation, but that in observing it we are conforming to the clearly-manifested will of God. It is evident, that this consideration will give a value to the institution which can be supplied by no other, and secure a love and respect for it, and a delight in it, which nothing else can so effectually produce. Hence the question is presented, with a high and impressive claim to a true and definite answer, Is any other than the *seventh* day of the week sustained by the important and indisputable sanction of *divine authority*? If this, and this only, be the Sabbath of God's appointment, for general and permanent use, then, by the substitution of another day, the institution is shorn of its chief excellence and force—yea, it is virtually annulled. It no longer exists as

God ordained it, for the express reason that he gave for it. This is a point which it becomes Christians seriously to look at.

II. It is not the province of Rulers, Bishops, or Councils, to legislate for the Church, and to bind the consciences of men in this or any other matter. Man's appointment of another day than the one contained in the Divine Enactment, does not make it *the Sabbath of the Lord*. It is only a *human law*, resting on *human authority*. Therefore, all attempts to enforce the observance of such an institution as being of divine authority, are calculated to mislead and ensnare souls. It is "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men." Our faith in this matter "should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." The question is not, What day have men judged most proper? and, What reasons for the institution have they deemed the most appropriate? and, What day have civil rulers sanctioned by their decrees and penalties?—but it is, What day has God sanctified and blessed as a day of rest? It is manifest that no man should stop his inquiries until he is able to produce a clear divine warrant for his practice.

III. The fact that there is a lamentable division among professors of religion in regard to the true design of the weekly Sabbath, and the proper day to be observed, evinces the great importance of investigation, and of arriving at a correct knowledge of the Divine Will. This division is not likely to cease till a more general and thorough knowledge of the subject is obtained, and a deeper interest therein is felt. Can it reasonably be supposed that the whole church will become united in the observance of the *first* day of the week, if it is not the Sabbath of the Bible? Will

it ever be the case, that God will have no witnesses for his own unrepealed and unadulterated institution?—none that shall call the Sabbath of his own appointment “a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shall honor him therein?” No—this will never be! Admitting that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is still binding, there is no doubt that there will ever be a remnant, at least, who will conscientiously observe it. For his great name’s sake, God will not suffer this prominent part of his law to be universally corrupted and profaned. And hence, if a preference continues to be given, as it is now, to a day which He has not designated and made holy, there will, of necessity, be a protracted division in the ranks of Zion, and the cause of the Redeemer will, on this account, continue to suffer. The faithful witnesses will unquestionably continue to prophecy, though clothed in sackcloth, and to bear testimony against the innovation. And no earthly power can prevent them. Resolves, and proscriptions, and gibbets, will not wholly suppress their testimony in favor of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Therefore, the occasion of the present division must be put away by a general return to the uncorrupted appointment of God, or the same cause for regret and mourning which now exists will continue to afflict the church. Let those who regard the unity and peace of Zion, seriously lay to heart this consequence.

IV. It must be admitted, that in so important a matter as a weekly Sabbath, our great moral Legislator has sufficiently declared his will to enable honest and impartial inquirers to arrive at a true result. If it would be reasonable to expect explicit information of his will concerning any point, it would certainly be reasonable to expect it concerning this, seeing the

claims of this law would come in direct contact with the cupidity of men, and sensibly influence the arrangements of business and pleasure—yea, deeply affect the general interests of society. Were the data furnished, from which contemplative and well-disposed minds might *infer* a weekly Sabbath, its observance and its ends could not be extensively secured without an *explicit* warrant. Therefore, if God intended there should be a Sabbath—yea, we might with propriety say, that if he intended his religion and worship should be preserved in the world—he would have given an explicit law upon this subject—one, of course, which could be easily discovered, and the permanent obligation of which could be readily traced.

V. It is an obvious *fact*, that God *has legislated* upon this subject—that he has once made a law for the observance of the *seventh day* as a *weekly Sabbath*. He did this at the close of his creative operations. Excepting marriage, the seventh-day Sabbath is the oldest institution in the world. Moreover, God gave a new edition of this law at the promulgation of the Decalogue upon Mount Sinai, under circumstances of peculiar and awful solemnity and majesty; first pronouncing it, in connection with the other nine commandments, with an audible voice from the Mount, in the hearing of all Israel, amidst thunders, and flames, and tempests; and afterwards writing the *entire ten* on two tables of stone, for a perpetual rule of action. It is obvious, also, that *obedience* to this institution, so solemnly stated and defined, and enforced by so plain and adequate a reason, was regarded as a prominent item of duty, and received his *marked approbation*, whereas *disobedience* received his *marked disapprobation*. It is also clear, that good men throughout the times of the Old Testament were peculiarly zealous



for this institution, and sought diligently to prevent its neglect or desecration, and to secure its legitimate advantages. Thus far all is plain, and is generally conceded.

VI. It is a principle which no proficient in the science of Government, *divine* or *human*, will deny, that a law, once enacted and in force, remains in force, unless repealed or amended by the same authority which first enacted it. Hence, if the law respecting the seventh-day weekly Sabbath has not been repealed or amended by the same authority which first enacted it, it still remains in full force and obligation, as originally given. This conclusion is *legitimate, necessary, and undeniable*. It is obvious to persons of every capacity. And we here declare our deliberate and settled conviction, from a careful and thorough examination of the matter, that there has never been any such repeal or amendment; hence, that our obligation, and that of all men, to keep the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, remains without the least abatement. "Till heaven and earth pass," we believe, according to the declaration of the Saviour, "one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." We alledge, then, fearless of successful contradiction, that it *never has been so repealed or amended*, and hence is *now binding* upon the entire family of man.

VII. From the nature of the case, and from God's declared will, and procedure in other cases on scriptural record, it is evident that the same divine authority is attached to *the day* of the week to be observed, as belongs to the *institution itself*, so that there is no room to say, that if a *seventh part* of time is observed as a holy rest, it is not essential which day of the week is selected. When God appointed the Passover to be

kept on the fourteenth day of the first month at even, the time of keeping it could not be changed to the thirteenth or fifteenth of the month, without disregarding his authority. There was, indeed, a specified case in which those who were not in the prescribed circumstances to keep the fast at the time appointed, might celebrate it on the fourteenth day of the second month at even. But without this express divine provision, no departure from the first arrangement would have been allowable. And when God commanded Saul to slay the Amalekites, without exception, together with the sheep and the cattle, it did not answer for him to spare their king, and "the best of the sheep and the oxen for sacrifice." For this deviation from the course prescribed, God pronounced him a transgressor, and visited him in judgment, declaring that "to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." So when God instituted a weekly Sabbath, and specified the seventh day for that purpose, assigning a special and appropriate reason, it was manifestly his will that that particular day should be observed; and the substitution of another day, without subsequent instruction to that effect, cannot be reconciled with a due regard for his supreme authority. It is "changing the ordinance, and breaking the everlasting covenant."

VIII. It is evident that the substitution of the *first* day of the week for the *seventh*, as a weekly Sabbath, which has been adopted by the major part of the professors of Christianity, has presented, and continues to present, a formidable obstacle to the conversion of the Jews, and the introduction of the millennium. It is well known, that the Jews as a body are exceedingly tenacious of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment; that, with few exceptions, they have persevered from ancient times in its observance; and that they consid-

er it a prominent article in the religion of their forefathers. This practice has been unbroken in the nation from the time of the giving of the law upon Mount Sinai till the present day. There have been, indeed, many instances of Sabbath-breaking among them, and at present there is reason to believe that the motives which govern them in its observance are sadly deficient. But the *practice itself* is tenaciously adhered to, as required by the unrepealed law of the God of Israel. And, if our views are correct, they have the right of the case, and the majority of Christians have corrupted the law. This, therefore, is a formidable obstacle to their embracing Christianity. To become *first-day* Christians (and such compose a vast majority of professors) they must relinquish or change one of the precepts of the Decalogue, and dissent from a custom held sacred by their ancestors, and deeply venerated by themselves; and that, too, without seeing any *divine warrant* produced for such a departure. This unauthorized practice of keeping the first instead of the seventh day of the week, cannot fail to prove a powerful objection in their view to embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ. It is true that they are tenacious also of other practices enjoined in the Old Testament, which Christians justly regard as obsolete. But as to *these*, we can show authority for their *abrogation*. We can appeal to the New Testament records, and show that the Mosaic *ritual*, "the law of commandments contained in ordinances," which constituted the enmity or separation between Jews and Gentiles, was abolished by the death of Christ—that "he took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." But the same course cannot be successfully pursued with respect to the seventh-day Sabbath. The Decalogue in which this is found was not included in the abrogated ritual. It is altogether a distinct

thing. wherefore the Jews cannot be met in the same way with regard to the weekly Sabbath as they can with regard to the typical observances which had their accomplishment in Christ. Hence the stumbling-block remains. And yet those who observe the first day are generally praying for and expecting the conversion of the Jews, and, in connection therewith, the millennial glory of the church. What an inconsistency is this! While they are praying for their national conversion and return to the land of their forefathers, and are beginning to use some other means for that end, they, by their palpable violation of the law of the fourth commandment, place a most formidable obstacle in their way, and pursue a course calculated to augment their prejudices, confirm their unbelief, and retard the approach of millennial glory. To bring Jews and Gentiles together in the observance of the Sabbath, the one party or the other must materially change their practice. And which is it most reasonable to expect will ultimately be compelled to make the change—the *Jews*, who have the authority of God's example and express precept to sustain them, or the *Gentiles*, who can claim no such authority for a first-day Sabbath? Surely, we need not be at a loss for an answer. It is confidently believed, that this subject has no inconsiderable bearing upon the condition and prospects of the Jews. If a few conversions are now effected among them, what might be expected if Christians would remove the stumbling-blocks which their own errors have placed in their way? Would we enter an effectual plea in behalf of this wonderful and long-neglected people, we know not how we could do it better than to plead for the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Let those whose "heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is," like Paul's, "that they might be saved," give this subject a thorough and

impartial consideration, and return to the path of strict obedience.

IX. It is not to be expected, that an effectual check can be put to the sin of Sabbath-breaking, till the duty of keeping the Sabbath is so taught, understood, and practiced, that the sanction of express divine authority can be brought to bear upon it. Though a weekly rest be profitable, both as it respects "the life that now is, and that which is to come," there is much in the carnal views and inclinations of men to oppose it, to resist its restrictions, and to thwart its purposes. Hence powerful considerations and inducements are necessary to suppress its desecration, and insure its proper observance. Not only the *unbelieving world*, but *Christians*, in their present imperfect state, need to have this institution thoroughly guarded to prevent its abuse. If it be considered as resting upon *doubtful authority*; if it be viewed as sustained merely by *inference*, and the *premises* from which the inference is drawn be at best questionable, and do not *necessarily* authorize it; if the principal argument for it be founded on a supposed apostolic example of meeting for public worship on the first day of the week, which is sustained only by *two* passages, while those *very passages* fail to mark it as *a Sabbath*, or to give the least intimation of its having been introduced as *a substitute* for the former Sabbath, and even fail to imply, necessarily, that meetings of this description were *stated* and *general* in the churches in the apostolic age; and if it be found, from subsequent ecclesiastical history, that the first day, called Sunday and Lord's day, was not regarded by Christians in the first centuries after the apostles as *a Sabbath*, nor as *substituted therefore*, but only as a *festival* in commemoration of the resurrection—a *festival* observed in connection with the Sabbath, but not accom-

panied with a *resting from worldly labor*, till the time of Constantine the Great; yea, if but a part of those who are considered experimental Christians, look upon it *now* as properly a *Sabbath*, or day of *holy rest*, while others regard it merely as a day for *public worship*, and even such as call it a Sabbath conceive, in many instances, that the *strict* observance formerly required is somewhat *modified*; we can easily perceive, that it wants that *explicit sanction*—that *high* and *overpowering authority*—which will be likely to awe the public into obedience—which is necessary, indeed, to give Christians themselves a proper sense of its sanctity, and of the evil of its desecration—to induce them “not to do their own ways, nor to find their own pleasure, nor to speak their own words,” in it. In vain do its friends procure for it the resolutions of churches and synods, the essays of the learned, and the decrees of the State; if it fails of being expressly supported by the supreme authority of God, to whom all must render a final and strict account, it will lack the main motive to obedience—it will be unattended with that power which, above all others, acts upon the conscience, and makes men feel their obligation. And as such authority does not pertain to a first-day Sabbath, but is limited to the seventh day, it is manifest that no thorough check to Sabbath desecration can be imposed, till men change their views and practice, and place the institution on its original and proper basis.

X. The power of custom, though sustained by ecclesiastical and civil enactments, and with corresponding forfeitures and penalties, ought not to prevent investigation and discourage reform in this important matter. When the claims of the original Sabbath are plainly presented, many seem to be convinced



of their justness; but, at the same time, think that a general return to the observance of the seventh day is impracticable. They alledge that the custom of keeping the first day has been so long and so generally maintained—that it is so intimately wrought into the habits, calculations, and business of life—that it has received such explicit sanction from the civil powers, obedience thereto being required by the authority of the State, and the disobedient being subjected to civil pains and penalties—and that it is so often, ably, and pointedly vindicated by the first ministers, professors, and commentators in the popular churches, that it is in vain to expect a change, and that the cause of Sabbath-keeping is rather retarded than promoted by efforts to change the present custom. And it is highly probable that some, in view of these difficulties, forbear to give the subject a close investigation. But if the same views and modes of reasoning had been adopted in other cases, what would have become of the various reformatations which are now established, and even triumphant? What would have become of the whole subject of *Protestantism*? There is nothing more impracticable in a Sabbath reform than in any other reform. In other cases, difficulties which at first seemed insurmountable, have given way to laborious, prayerful, and united efforts. And there is the same reason to believe that they will give way in this, if a proper zeal is once awakened, and the friends of the Sabbath are resolved to examine the subject, build on the foundation of truth, and persevere in their labors, with union and vigor, relying upon the protecting power and blessing of Israel's God. It is manifest that no earthly consideration should impede our investigation of this matter, that no array of opposition and discouragement should daunt us, and that no motives to sit still or pass along with the current

of public opinion, if that be not founded in truth, should be suffered to influence us, and detain us in the wilderness of error. The cause of obedience is the cause of God, and we should steadfastly labor to promote it, and trust in him for ultimate victory.

XI. As a consequence of the foregoing principles and facts, we are constrained to regard those who observe the first day of the week, to the neglect of the seventh day, as having sadly deviated from the path of obedience, and we feel ourselves bound to admonish them, and labor respectfully and kindly to reclaim them. We cannot think it *immaterial* what day of the week is observed as a day of rest, when God has specified the seventh, and *no other*, as a weekly Sabbath. We cannot think it a small matter to substitute the first day in the room of the seventh, although it be done in honor of the resurrection of our Lord, and because that event appears to demand equal and even greater commemoration than the work of creation, so long as there is no divine warrant therefor. This appears to us to be making the wisdom of man the foundation of duty, and not the wisdom of God. We discover *two* evils here; first, changing *the day* without order or permission from God; and, secondly, changing *the reason* for the institution, when the Lord hath not spoken. And is not this a departure from the rule of duty? And has not the Lord a controversy with Zion for this? If God had seen fit to substitute the first day for the seventh day, on account of the resurrection, (supposing it to have occurred on the first day, which, however, is not certain,) and to assign another reason than the original one for keeping the Sabbath, he would doubtless have given order to that effect. His not having done so, makes it manifest that he did not see fit to do this, and that he considered the



former Sabbath as well adapted to celebrate the work of redemption as it was the work of creation—adapted perfectly to subserve *all the purposes* of a weekly Sabbath. And we find this to be the case by experience. Here, therefore, we rest satisfied with the divine arrangement, and feel deeply the importance of universal conformity thereto. Consequently, our regard for the honor of God, and for the sabbatic institution, induces us to bring this subject in the present form before the Christian public. We do not think that we are justly chargeable with opposing or retarding the practice of Sabbath-keeping, because we protest against keeping the first day of the week as a divine institution, and faithfully present the claims of the original Sabbath. What better course can we take to secure a proper observance of the Sabbath, than to labor to restore it as God originally made it? It is not just to charge us with *Judaizing*—with virtually denying that Christ has come in the flesh and introduced the New Testament dispensation. We might as well be charged with this for maintaining that men should not “have any other God before the Lord,” or that they should “not kill,” nor “steal.” These precepts are in close connection with that requiring the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, and *stand or fall with it*. The truth of the case is, that the law containing the weekly Sabbath is the law both of the Old Testament and of the New. There is no Christian Sabbath distinct from the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. If this be a correct view—and we see not how it can be gainsayed—we in this respect perform our duty as subjects of God’s moral government only when we exhort men to “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” and when we labor to impress them with the annexed fact, that “the seventh day is the Sabbath.”

These are some of our Reasons for introducing the subject of the Sabbath, as originally given, to your consideration. And we seriously ask you, whether they are not *sufficient*—whether they are not *adequate* for earnestly and perseveringly inviting investigation and reformation. If there be any blame attached to us in the matter, it is for not having labored more diligently and efficiently in this cause. Are we not clearly bound, by way of promoting inquiry and reform, to bear a more pointed testimony against the evil in question, and to vindicate the claims of the seventh-day Sabbath with more zeal and firmness than ever before? Are we not peculiarly obligated to labor to remove, if possible, the veil which is upon the minds of the great majority of professors of Christianity, correct the false notions received by tradition from ‘the Fathers,’ and effectually dispel the delusion so extensively prevailing. We do not claim the right of dictating to the consciences of others. “To their own Master they stand or fall.” The only ground which we would assume is that which was occupied by the Apostle Paul when he said, “It is written, I have believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak.” And also by the Saviour, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” And again, “Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.” Surely, “the Lord hath spoken, and who can but prophesy?” How can we bear to see one of his commandments made void by human tradition?—to see the flock of Jesus divided concerning this question, where union is so necessary and desirable?—to witness the unavoidable interruptions occasioned by the different parties, and the triumph of the adversaries of religion?—to

observe those for whom Christ died grossly misled by mistaken teachers, provoking the Most High by neglecting to keep a day which he has made sacred, and transferring the sacredness of his own appointment to an ordinance of men, or, what is still worse, regarding the original institution as annulled, and placing in its stead a day merely of memorial of the resurrection and of worship, divested of the main characteristics of the Sabbath, and resting upon no solid basis—its foundation, at best, being *mere probability* and *conjecture*? Must it not, of necessity, be very painful to us, to see those who are our neighbors, and by profession our fellow Christians, in a case so clear and important, and involving such high and permanent interests, contented with such evidence as they would blush to introduce in relation to almost any other point? How can we bear to see *Protestants*, whose avowed maxim is, that “scriptural authority alone is sufficient to determine matters of faith and duty,” dispensing with their own rule, in not requiring expressly a “thus saith the Lord” for their practice, and relying upon far-fetched and inconclusive reasonings, and mere probabilities—yea, in some instances, by their own concession, going out of the Bible to ecclesiastical history, to find a warrant for observing the first day of the week, which warrant itself, even if proof from that source were allowable, is by no means adequate?

Do we talk of reforming the church, while the guilt of disobedience in this matter rests upon the great majority of her members?—while ministers, doctors, and professors of divinity, break one of the commandments of the Decalogue, and teach men so, and the multitude are willingly obedient to their instructions? It is *preposterous*! A thorough reformation cannot

be effected under such circumstances, or while things remain thus. It is time that it were more deeply laid to heart, that one of the leading objects of Christ's mission was to "save his people from their sins"—that "he gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"—and that "he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him?" In view of such passages, although it be admitted that occasional mistakes and sins, being repented of, do not absolutely divest men of the Christian character and hopes, it will appear, that obedience to the will of God is an indispensable requisite and all-absorbing consideration; and that, if any man be in Christ, he is verily "a new creature"—that he will be "zealous of good works." One in ancient times, who was eminent for his religious knowledge, observed, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto *all* thy commandments." And this respect, or obedience, which constitutes the moral purity and glory of Christians, and is the test of their discipleship, must be regulated and governed by the precepts of that very law which contains the seventh-day Sabbath. There are, indeed, some precepts peculiar to the gospel, such as "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," "Baptism," and "the Lord's Supper." Nevertheless, "the commandments of God," so often and so particularly alluded to as the rule of Christian duty, are eminently the precepts of the Decalogue—the "*ten words*" or "*testimonies*" which God spake with his own mouth, and wrote with his own finger, and no one of which has ever been erased from the sacred code, or undergone the least alteration; for "the law of the Lord is *perfect*, converting the soul." The keeping of the weekly Sabbath, therefore, as God

appointed it, and has continued it, enters vitally into the matter of holy obedience—the true test of Christianity. If the prescriptions of the fourth commandment are not faithfully adhered to, our obedience is imperfect. We are the proper subjects of reprehension, and may reasonably expect corresponding tokens of Divine displeasure. Sabbath-keeping is peculiarly adapted to serve as a test of loyalty to God, on account of its frequent occurrence, the weekly remission which it requires of secular business, the peremptory call which it makes on us to leave all our own works and ways for the special service of God, and the opportunity which it affords, amidst the common hurry and bustle of this world, to pause and examine our state and prospects for eternity. It is well calculated for this, because it so clearly and so often teaches us that the will of God should govern all our actions. All these and similar considerations, therefore, should combine to fix our attention to the very day of God's appointment, so that we may sensibly feel that we are governed by a divine warrant, and have the sublime pleasure of knowing that we are conforming to the will of God. Taking this course, we not only preserve a good conscience, but tread in the footsteps of God's redeemed flock. We imitate those who, in the times of the Old Testament, "took pleasure in his holy day." We follow the example of the Redeemer himself, who was a strict observer of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. His vindication of the disciples in the case of "plucking the ears of corn" to satisfy their hunger, which some have thought was a deviation from the strictness originally required, was in perfect accordance with the true intent and meaning of the law, else his obedience would have been imperfect, and thereby the entire prospects of the Christian would have been blasted. Under the circumstan-

ces, it was a work of absolute necessity, and therefore not prohibited. As our Lord Jesus Christ was unquestionably a strict observer of the seventh-day Sabbath, it is a commanding motive for a continued observance of it by his followers, there being no substitute appointed.

The Apostles, also, and primitive Christians, were conscientious observers of this institution as originally delivered. The Sabbath so often mentioned in the apostolic records is unquestionably the seventh-day Sabbath. Who will dare deny this? And from ecclesiastical history it appears that the whole Christian church, with very few exceptions at most, kept the seventh-day Sabbath, in obedience to the law contained in the Decalogue, down to the time of Constantine, in the fourth century, and even afterward. So true it is, that we imitate the church in her primitive and purest times, in keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment. Under such circumstances, therefore, is it strange that we should strenuously advocate the practice?—that we should adhere to it amidst reproaches, privations, and suffering?—and that we should feel the most ardent desire for the reformation of our brethren who differ from us? The cause is sufficient to demand this deep feeling, this unwearied effort, these prayers and tears, with a vast increase of holy sensibility, tenderness of conscience, and active labor, to promote this branch of obedience. We therefore earnestly, and with all due respect, commend the subject to your notice. Do not pass it by as a matter of little or no consequence. It surely involves much that should be dear to the friends of Jesus, and the advocates of pure morality—to such as would see the church appear “fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.” We entreat you, therefore, for the glory of God, the honor of his



law and government, the unity and perfection of the church, your own spiritual attainments and acceptance with God, the conversion and salvation of sinners, the triumph of truth over infidelity, the redemption of the long-neglected house of Israel, the hastening of millennial prosperity, and the recompenses of eternity, to give this subject a most serious consideration, to examine and weigh our proofs and arguments, and, if you find yourselves in error, as we confidently believe you will, to reform. With the high consideration in view, that "wisdom's ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace," and that to pursue them "is for your life," we invite and seek your recovery to sound views and practice in this matter. We "long after you in the bowels of Jesus Christ," regarding him as "the Lord of the Sabbath," not to repeal or change the sacred institution, but to protect it, and enforce obedience thereto. Firmly believing that "we are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ," we cannot by any means discharge our own convictions at this eventful period, this remarkable age of attempted reform, without using all the persuasion in our power to promote an investigation of this matter.

We behold with sincere gratification the efforts which have been made, and are being made, in regard to other subjects of special importance to the church and the world. We would cordially coöperate with their respective advocates in securing, as far as practicable, a strict obedience to other moral precepts, and in emancipating the human mind from sin and error. But we cannot forget that God has given a *fourth*, as well as a *first*, a *sixth*, a *seventh*, and a *tenth* commandment, and that it rests upon equal authority with those, and with either of the precepts of the Decalogue; and hence we plead in its behalf. We do this as moral

and accountable beings, as Protestants, as Christians, as reformers, and as cotemporaries of our brethren in the nineteenth century, a period so distinguished for its moral and political enterprises, and for its proximity to the time when it shall be said, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ." We approach you in the belief that "open rebuke is better than secret love"—that "faithful are the wounds of a friend"—and that we "should admonish one another daily, and so much the more as we see the day approaching." We feel bound to exert ourselves in this cause, in the belief that "our labor will not be in vain in the Lord," that the church is "coming up out of the wilderness," and that we live in the dawn of a brighter day, in a period of the world when the scriptures and the providences of God concur in affording the highest encouragement to the faithful advocates of truth and duty. And we do not hesitate to express our expectation, that by the blessing of God upon the well-directed and persevering labors of his people, and the continued and augmenting spirit of inquiry, there will soon be achieved a glorious reformation in respect to the subject of this Tract. God will "overturn, and overturn, and overturn, till He shall come, whose right it is," and "the sanctuary shall be cleansed."

Finally—we enter our testimony in what we deem an important case, in the hope, through grace, of meeting all "the faithful in Christ Jesus in the everlasting rest," of which the rest of the seventh day is a lively and touching type and foretaste.